

UNLIREC Newsletter

UNLIREC, as a regional office of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, seeks to advance the cause of practical disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean as part of its commitment to support Member States in their implementation of international disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments.

UNLIREC facilitates the incorporation of international arms control standards in private security firms in Peru



UNLIREC, in collaboration with Peru's National Superintendence for the Control of Security Services, Arms, Ammunition and Explosives for Civilian Use (SUCAMEC), trained 20 representatives from 16 different armed private security companies on the proper storage, control

and safe-keeping of arms and ammunition in their respective companies. The overall aim of this training, held from 22-23 July 2015, was to minimize the risk and avoid the diversion of arms and ammunition to illicit channels.

It is widely known that arms and ammunition stolen or lost from both state and private arsenals represent an important source for criminal use. These risks can be significantly mitigated if those in charge of the control and administration of these arms deposits implement internationally-recognized standards and good practices.

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UNLIREC experts covered topics, such as the classification of arms and ammunition, secure storage and inventory management, risk evaluation, security plans and incident notification, among others. Practical exercises on mitigating risks complemented and contributed to the theoretical sessions.

This workshop forms part of a larger UNLIREC initiative to strengthen the oversight of and build capacities for improved small arms control and non-proliferation among the private security sector in both Peru and El Salvador. The main goal of this German-funded project, implemented in cooperation with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control

of Armed Forces (DCAF), is to promote the incorporation of internationally-accepted standards, good practices, and initiatives, such as the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) and the United Nations International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS).

By providing stockpile management assistance to Latin American and Caribbean States, UNLIREC is supporting improvements in public security and the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN 2001 PoA).

UNLIREC supports improved arms and ammunition control among the private security sector in El Salvador



UNLIREC launched a new German-funded project aimed at improving arms and ammunition control among the private security sector on 28 July 2015 in El Salvador. This project is currently being implemented in both Peru and El Salvador. The national executive seminar, targeting 15 representatives of national agencies in charge of controlling and regulating this sector, represents the first activity within this project to be delivered in the country.

The over-riding theme of the seminar was the UN International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) on regulating private security companies (PSCs), and on the International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for Private Security Service Providers (PSSPs). The ICoC aims to clarify international standards for the private security industry, especially when operating in complex environments, and improve security companies' oversight and accountability.

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Private security has grown over the last years in Latin America, becoming more professional in its offer of protection and monitoring services with the use of arms.

This growth has given way to a higher demand for legal arms and ammunition needed by PSCs to operate. Similar to government agencies that use arms, PSCs and their agents are equally vulnerable to insecurity (thefts, attacks) and corruption (illegal selling and unlawful use of arms), which in turn can ignite the diversion of these weapons to illicit channels, and the potential for violent and criminal acts against citizen's safety.

Mirroring the July training conducted in Peru, UNLIREC trained 32 representatives from 26 private security companies in El Salvador (30-31 July) as part of a technical workshop on good practices and international standards for the management of arms and ammunition inventories of PSCs.

UNLIREC's project, developed in partnership with the Geneva Centre for

the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), contributes to reducing the risk of diversion through training, guidance and recommendations to security companies for the purpose of helping improve the management and security of their arms and ammunition inventories. UNLIREC's technical assistance is based on internationally-recognized standards, good practices, procedures and initiatives.

UNLIREC and the Government of Belize hold joint meeting to develop Draft Voluntary National Action Plan to strengthen the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)

On 29 July, UNLIREC held consultations with the Government of Belize to discuss its Draft National Action Plan on Implementation of UNSCR 1540(2004) and the creation of a National Inter-institutional 1540 Working Group. This meeting brought together 12 representatives from eight institutions and agencies (including the Police Department, Attorney Generals Ministry, Financial Intelligence Unit, Immigration & Nationality Service, Port Authority, Defense Force, etc.) to discuss the needs, priorities and next steps for 1540 implementation in the country.



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UNLIREC presented summaries of the resolution and its main obligations, as well as of UNLIREC's national legal study and its main recommendations for better aligning 1540 obligations with national provisions. In turn, Belize delivered a presentation on the status of implementation of the resolution in the country to date.

During the intense one-day workshop, the group identified and established a series of official focal points from each of the stakeholder institutions present, and discussed the content of a Voluntary National Action Plan that is to be presented to the 1540 Committee in the near future. Issues relating to the modernization of legislation, training and equipment needs, as well as assignment of specific roles and responsibilities, were addressed throughout the day.

Prior to this activity, UNLIREC held preparatory meetings with the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of

National Security and the Superintendent of Police and Legal Advisor, whereby they reiterated their country's commitment to strengthening the implementation of resolution 1540.



This meeting forms part of UNLIREC's 1540 Assistance Package for Caribbean States with the financial support of the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Security and Non-proliferation.

IMO-UNLIREC maritime and port security risk management table-top exercise

As part of its US-funded technical assistance package to strengthen the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004), UNLIREC partnered with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) from 19-20 August 2015 to conduct a risk management table top exercise in maritime security in collaboration with the Ministry of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago. UNLIREC and IMO experts succeeded at engaging 15 stakeholders from various agencies and institutions in active discussions around a series of potential threat scenarios and cases and

feasible mitigations strategies and practices.



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Specific themes included inter-institutional coordination, adoption of preventive and reactive measures to certain threats, existing operational procedures at the various agencies and current legal framework establishing roles, and responsibilities of relevant institutions.

This table top exercise, aimed specifically at addressing the obligations on adoption of border control measures contained in operative paragraph 3 of the resolution, complements UNLIREC's work in Trinidad and Tobago in other critical areas, such as modernization of legislation, export controls and identification and handling of nuclear, chemical or biological material, which could be wrongfully used for proliferation purposes.

This represents the fifth activity conducted by UNLIREC in the country since the beginning of the programme in early 2014, and forms an integral part of the training component of the National Action Plan outline that UNLIREC has been

discussing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and all of the relevant stakeholders over the past few months.

As a follow-up to this joint training, UNLIREC delivered the same maritime and port security risk management course in Belize from 9-10 December to nearly 20 stakeholders from the National Police, Coast Guard and Port Authority.



UNLIREC has reaffirmed its commitment to continued collaboration with the Government of both Trinidad and Tobago and Belize to further strengthen the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in their respective countries.

“As long as these weapons exist, so, too, does the risk of their use — by accident or design. Let me be clear: the most reliable way to prevent both the proliferation and use of these weapons is through their total and verified elimination. There are no ‘right hands’ that can handle these ‘wrong weapons’.”

- United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (April 2013) -

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UNLIREC intensifies firearms forensic ballistics support to Caribbean States



Following the official launching of its new firearms forensic ballistics technical assistance package aimed at Caribbean States, UNLIREC carried out seven in-country missions to feed into its 'capacity building road maps' on forensic ballistics. These two-year maps will serve as a needs assessment, assistance planning, implementation and monitoring tool for the duration of the 2015-2017 project, and will provide the opportunity to monitor project implementation and outcome indicators during each mission.

The national assessments take into consideration the occupational health and safety of the firearms examiners (e.g. lead contamination), adequate protective equipment, firearms safety protocols, evidence management, as well as the continuing education plans for firearms and toolmark examiners and other laboratory personnel. The main recommendations of the assessment will be integrated into the two-year road maps.



During the 2015 visits to The Bahamas, Belize, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago, UNLIREC maximized its presence by conducting a forensic ballistics training course and executive seminar in each of the seven beneficiary States.

The three-day forensic ballistic training course increases the knowledge of firearms examiners, armourers and other

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specialized law enforcement personnel on firearms and ammunition identification and examination, comparison microscopy, and range of fire determination. The course includes a simulation of the presentation of expert testimony of forensic ballistic evidence in a court of law, thus allowing participants to exchange best practices and real-life challenges faced in the field.

By supporting proper forensic ballistics investigation strategies and the presentation of firearms and ballistics evidence in courts of law, UNLIREC is contributing to preventing and solving gun crimes across the region and to implementing both the UN 2001 PoA on Small Arms and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

The executive seminars, on the other hand, aimed at the institutional clients of firearms forensic ballistics (heads of investigative and crime scene units, prosecutors, magistrates, among others), shed light on the strengths and shortcomings of forensic ballistics in support of building court cases, as well as in generating intelligence to identify sources and routes used for illicit arms trafficking. In addition, best practices in forensic ballistics analysis and investigative techniques were reviewed.

This 2015-2017 assistance package, financed by the Governments of the United States and Canada, seeks to increase institutional efficiency and contribute to the reduction of impunity in cases of illicit arms trafficking and criminal armed violence throughout the Caribbean region.



UNLIREC assists Peruvian local authorities in destroying over 2,000 small arms

UNLIREC assisted Peruvian authorities in destroying over 2,000 small arms in the northern city of Trujillo, capital of La Libertad Region in Peru, on 1 September 2015. The 2,000 small arms destroyed originated in large part from weapons confiscated by the Peruvian National Police (PNP). The official destruction ceremony started with the ‘cutting’ of the weapons to render them inoperable, while

they await final destruction via ‘smelting’ at an iron and steel factory.



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This event forms part of the UN Joint Programme aimed at strengthening human security and community resilience by fostering peaceful co-existence in Peru, as well as part of SUCAMEC's awareness campaign on the risks of the indiscriminate use of small arms.

According to the Director of UNLIREC, Ms. Mélanie Régimbal, *"if each weapon has the potential to kill, injure or threaten someone, then this process of destruction has a clear impact on public security because it prevents dozens of small arms-related crimes from being committed"*. Ms

Régimbal went on to affirm: *"the destruction of small arms is one more step in preventing and reducing armed violence in La Libertad."*



UNLIREC supports Dominican Republic in draft legislation on WMD-related issues

From 29 September to 1 October 2015, a team of legal experts from UNLIREC travelled to Santo Domingo to hold a legal drafting session on UNSCR 1540 implementation with counterparts from the Dominican Republic.



UNLIREC's technical experts were accompanied by a former member of the Group of Experts of the 1540 Committee who lent support to Dominican Republic delegates from the ministries of mines and energy, defense and the customs office to draft a bill prohibiting non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting,

transferring, using and financing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery. The sessions also included dialogue on the establishment of adequate trade control measures for related material, as well as the adoption of effective physical accounting and protection measures for the production, use, storage and transportation of such material.

This draft bill, supported by several ministries and by the Office of the President, has been presented to the National Parliament for consideration. While the draft text undergoes the ordinary revision process in accordance with domestic laws, UNLIREC and technical experts from the Dominican Republic will continue working on subsidiary legislation and additional regulations to develop certain key aspects of the law, particularly those relating to the adoption of control lists, licensing and end-user controls.

Moreover, this draft bill will provide the Dominican Republic with a solid legal basis for adopting trade controls and measures to counter the proliferation of WMDs. The creation of a national authority, responsible for overseeing the implementation of the law and authorizing the transfer of ‘proliferation-sensitive’ materials, is also envisioned in the country.

During the mission and country visit, UNLIREC and an ad hoc committee made up of several institutions responsible for discussing and coordinating 1540-related matters, finalized the draft of the country’s Voluntary National Action Plan. The government indicated its interest in formally submitting this Action Plan to the 1540 Committee through the appropriate diplomatic channels.

Guatemala strengthens its ability to implement the Arms Trade Treaty



UNLIREC continues to support Latin American and Caribbean States in their implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) through its one-of-a-kind ATT Implementation Course aimed at national authorities with responsibilities in the import/export of conventional arms. Guatemala was the fourth country in the Central American region to benefit from this four-day theoretical and practical training delivered in the country’s capital from 13-16 October 2015.

The comprehensive course strengthened the knowledge of 29 participants from eight different institutions on the classification of conventional arms, identification of trends in the arms trade, and on national control systems of exportation and importation. Following the theoretical part of the course, an interactive practical exercise was conducted on arms transfer assessments in the regional context. During this activity, UNLIREC presented its new model

end-user certificate to participants, which succeeds at standardizing international best practices to reduce the risk of arms, ammunition, parts and components being diverted to illicit channels. The course was imparted by UNLIREC experts in collaboration with the DIGECAM legal department, which shared its national experiences.

The ATT course, made possible thanks to funding from Germany, Australia and Spain, aims to provide States with sufficient tools to ensure the effective implementation of the Treaty so that adequate control mechanisms can be established for all international transfers of arms, ammunition and their parts and components.



Previous courses were held in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and El Salvador. Thanks to the financial support from donors, the course and instruction materials are available to all ratifying States in Latin America and the Caribbean. To date, 20 countries in the region have ratified the Treaty, which entered into force on 24 December 2014.

“Every day, we at the United Nations see the human toll of an absence of regulations or lax controls on the arms trade. We see it in the suffering of civilian populations trapped by armed conflict or pervasive crime. We see it in the killing and wounding of civilians — including children, the most vulnerable of all. We see it in the massive displacement of people within and across borders. We see it through grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.”

-United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon -

UNLIREC promotes best practices in arms and ammunition management in private security companies in El Salvador

UNLIREC carried out a mission to El Salvador on 23-27 November 2015 to coordinate and implement activities that form part of its multi-year project to strengthen capacities for the effective and transparent management of small arms and ammunition in the private security sector. The ultimate goal of this project,

being implemented in both Peru and El Salvador, is to prevent arms theft and the diversion of arms and ammunition from the private security sector into illicit channels.

Over the course of the week, UNLIREC experts analyzed the levels of compliance

in five Salvadoran security companies with the UN International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS), in particular ISACS module 05.20 on stockpile management. Following discussions, UNLIREC experts shared its recommendations for increasing those levels of compliance and improving security and management. Additionally, they met with arms manufacturers and arsenal managers from private security companies to follow up on the training they received in the UNLIREC stockpile management course imparted in July 2015.

Upon completion of the mission, all interested parties agreed upon the 2016 roadmap and the inclusion of secondary markings to arms belonging to security companies with the use of laser technology. This type of secondary marking helps to improve stockpile management and comply with international agreements on combating illicit small arms trafficking. The technical guidelines for the markings are based on various international instruments and on ISACS module 05.30 on marking and registry management.



UNLIREC supports national campaign on preventing pyrotechnic incidents in Northern Peru

UNLIREC, as a member of the UN Joint Programme entitled ‘Strengthening Human Security and Community Resilience by Fostering the Promotion of Peaceful Coexistence in Peru’, supported the launching and development of a campaign to prevent pyrotechnic

incidents in the city of Trujillo from 23-28 November 2015. The “Safe and Happy 2015 Celebration” campaign is an initiative of Peru’s National Superintendence for the Control of Security Services, Arms, Ammunition and Explosives for Civil Use

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(SUCAMEC), a long-standing partner of UNLIREC.

This nationwide campaign includes awareness-raising activities in schools and on public roads, the broadcasting of radio and television advertisements, and the distribution of informative material. As a contribution to the Joint Programme activities for Human Security in Trujillo, this campaign succeeded at increasing the awareness among youth about both the dangers of using pyrotechnics and the safety measures to be taken when using them.



The awareness campaign activities were carried out in five educational establishments and reproduced in 12 additional schools via video, reaching approximately 11,000 school-aged children in Trujillo. The main messages of this campaign were “pyrotechnics are not toys”, “all pyrotechnics are dangerous”, “children should not play with pyrotechnics”, and “only adults are allowed to handle pyrotechnics”. Thanks to the support of the United Nations Volunteer Program, this activity reached a greater part of the population and invigorated the awareness campaign, contributing to the creation of a social network in Trujillo.

The UN Joint Programme for Strengthening Human Security supported the “Safe and Happy 2015 Celebration” campaign within the framework of other activities carried out in collaboration with public institutions and local authorities in Trujillo aimed at reducing and preventing criminal activities, gender-based violence and youth involvement in crime.

El Salvador initiates process towards creation of national control authority

UNLIREC, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, inaugurated a roundtable on the process towards creating a national control authority for implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in San Salvador on 8 December 2015. This technical gathering forms part of UNLIREC’s continued assistance to States in the region in the implementation of the Treaty.

This roundtable, the first of its kind delivered by UNLIREC, benefitted from the technical input of 34 national authorities

in charge of conventional arms transfer controls from six different institutions, as well as from those of a member of Argentina’s Executive Secretary of the National Commission to Control Strategic Materials, Sensitive Exports, and War Materials and the Director of the National Firearms Register (RENAR) also from Argentina.

The main purpose of the two-day gathering was to provide States with guidelines on the creation of a national control authority responsible for arms

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transfers and other elements in compliance with the provisions found in the Arms Trade Treaty and provide examples of international standards and models from other States at both the regional and global levels.



Moreover, the activity created a space for structured discussion on the essential aspects to be taken into consideration when creating the national authority. Aspects such as composition, functions, functionality and inter-institutional cooperation.

This roundtable and all instruction materials are available to ATT State Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean thanks to the financial support from the Federal Government of Germany. To date, 20 countries in the region have ratified the ATT, which came into force last 24 December 2014. It is expected that in the coming months other States in the region will join the group of State Parties.

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